

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

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FM AMCONSUL HAMBURG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3996

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN IMMEDIATE

USMISSION BERLIN

AMCONSUL BREMEN

AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF

AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

AMCONSUL MUNICH

AMCONSUL STUTTGART

C O N F I D E N T I A L HAMBURG 1391

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, GW

SUBJECT: HAMBURG CONSULAR DISTRICT: A FINAL ASSESSMENT OF THE
OCTOBER 3 BUNDESTAG ELECTIONS

REF: HAMBURG 1298

1. WITH LESS THAN 48 HOURS TO GO BEFORE THE OCT 3
BUNDESTAG ELECTION, THE POLITICAL PENDULUM IN THE HAMBURG
CONSULAR DISTRICT HAS BEGUN TO MOVE IMPERCEPTIBLY AWAY
FROM DEAD CENTER TOWARD AN INCREASINGLY SELF CONFIDENT
CDU. BUOYED BY THE DEFEAT OF THE INTRENCHED SOCIALIST
PARTY IN SWEDEN, THE TAINTED REPUTATION OF SPD MINISTER-
PRESIDENT ALBERT OSSWALD OVER THE PARTY BRIBERY SCANDAL IN
HESSE, THE DECLARATION BY HANS-GUENTHER WEBER, SPD TOWN
MANAGER OF BRAUNSCHWEIG, THAT HE KNOWS OF AT LEAST 1000
SPD PARTY MEMBERS WHO WILL BE WITHHOLDING THEIR ELEC-
TORAL SUPPORT IN THIS ELECTION BECAUSE OF THEIR OPPOSI-
TION TO SO CALLED LEFTIST-RADICAL INFLUENCES WITHIN THE
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PARTY AND BY THE EVER IMPROVING PERFORMANCE OF HELMUT

KOHL ON THE STUMP -- ALL OF THESE REASONS COMBINED HAVE SENT A CHARGE THROUGH THE CDU IN OUR DISTRICT WHICH WILL, WE BELIEVE, WIN THE PARTY ADDITIONAL SUPPORT IN EACH OF THE THREE HAMBURG LAENDER. THESE FACTORS TOGETHER WITH WHAT WE DETECT TO BE THE PREDOMINANT PRO-CDU SUBJECTIVE MOOD OF THE 10 TO 12 PERCENT UNCOMMITTED VOTE WILL, WE THINK, TILT THE SCALES IN THE HAMBURG DISTRICT IN FAVOR OF THE CDU.

2. THREE WEEKS AGO WE ANALYZED THE GENERAL SITUATION AT THAT JUNCTURE (HAMBURG 1298) AS A PHOTO FINISH FOR THE SPD/FDP COALITION. WE STILL BELIEVE IT WILL BE A PHOTO FINISH BUT THE FACTORS ALLUDED TO ABOVE PLUS OUR ADMITTED FINGERSPITZENGEFUEHL FOR THE MOOD OF THE SWING VOTERS LEAD US NOW TO BELIEVE THE CDU WILL WIN THE SLIGHTEST OF VICTORIES, BUT A VICTORY NEVERTHELESS, IN OUR CONSULAR DISTRICT.

3. ONE CANNOT, OF COURSE, PROJECT AN A PRIORI CONCLUSION ABOUT WHAT MIGHT DEVELOP ON THE NATIONAL SCALE FROM WHAT WE PREDICT WILL OCCUR IN THE HAMBURG DISTRICT. NEVERTHELESS, THIS BEING SAID, DEVELOPMENTS HERE ARE NOT AT ALL INSIGNIFICANT CONSIDERING THAT IN HAMBURG, LOWER SAXONY AND SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN THERE ARE 100 SEATS UP FOR GRABS, OR APPROXIMATELY 20 PERCENT OF THE TOTAL COMPOSITION OF THE BUNDESTAG.

4. FORTUNATELY, FOR KOHL, HE AND CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT HAVE NOT SQUARED OFF IN ANY DEBATE THUS FAR DURING THIS CAMPAIGN. HAVING ATTENDED VARIOUS OF THEIR RALLYS DURING THE PAST SEVERAL WEEKS, IT'S QUITE EVIDENT THAT KOHL WOULD BE NO MATCH IN THE ROUGH AND TUMBLE OF A PUBLIC DEBATE WITH SCHMIDT AND YET, EVEN IN HAMBURG, A BASTION OF SOCIALIST STRENGTH, KOHL HAS BEGUN TO OUT DRAW SCHMIDT BY A SLIGHT MARGEIN. ON SEPTEMBER 26 SCHMIDT ADDRESSED AN AUDIENCE OF APPROXIMATELY 5,000 AT THE CONGRESS CENTER AND THE FOLLOWING EVENING KOHL SPOKE TO AN EVEN LARGER AND MORE ANIMATED AUDIENCE. NOTHING ORIGINAL WAS SAID BY EITHER CANDIDATE BUT KOHL AROUSED THE GREATER ENTHUSIASM. ATTACKING THE SPD FOR ITS PROFLIGATE ECONOMIC POLICIES AND THE FDP FOR ITS QUIXOTIC TOLERANCE OF COM-

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MUNIST TEACHERS IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM, KOHL WAS IN GOOD FORM AND, PERHAPS CARRIED AWAY BY THE EBULLIENT RESPONSE OF HIS AUDIENCE, BROUGHT DOWN THE HOUSE BY AD-LIBBING THAT HE THOUGHT HE WOULD SEND THE CHANCELLOR A CARD JUST TO SAY "WISH YOU WERE HERE."

5. AS WE APPROACH THE DAY OF RECKONING ON OCTOBER 3 THE FOLLOWING IS OUR BEST ESTIMATE, LAND BY LAND, OF THE

FINAL RESULTS AS WE SEE THEM:

HAMBURG: SPD 9
 FDP 1 (MINUS 1)
 CDU 6 (PLUS 1)

SHOULD THERE BE A DEMOGRAPHIC SHIFT IN THE HAMBURG POPU-
LATION -- AS WE BELIEVE THERE MIGHT HAVE BEEN -- TO
LOWER SAXONY OR TO SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN, THEN WE PREDICT
A ONE SEAT LOSS FOR THE SPD AS WELL.

LOWER SAXONY: SPD 26 (MINUS 4)
 FDP 4 (MINUS 1)
 CDU 32 (PLUS 5)

SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN: SPD 9 (MINUS 2)
 FDP 2
 CDU 11 (PLUS 2)

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